

1. Following are questions submitted to southafricapepfar@state.gov.

1.1 Q: Would it be acceptable to include in our proposal the dispersal of small grants to allow families caring for OVC to start up micro businesses and thereby generate income that will be used to help in the care of their OVC?

A: Please review the APS and the evaluation criteria for information about projects solicited through the APS and how they will be evaluated. Generally projects that support OVC are eligible for funding. The Emergency Plan has supported projects that involve dispersal of grants. The Emergency Plan has also supported projects providing assistance to OVC through income generation. Different OVC services are listed in the South Africa Strategic Information Manual available on the South Africa Emergency Plan website. <http://pepfar.pretoria.usembassy.gov>. Go to PEPFAR@work> Policy Guidance.

1.2 Q: Can an NGO submit (a) its own proposal and also (b) submit the same proposal, but as part of a wider proposal submitted by a prime?

A: Yes. Applicants may submit multiple proposals. Each applicant must determine how to design their proposal consistent with the APS and the evaluation criteria.

1.3 Q: Given the emphasis on meeting ARV treatment targets, would you advise a prospective non-ARV provider applicant to link with an ARV-treatment providing NGO, even if there are no programmatic linkages, so as to (a) get the ARV treatment going, (b) free up the ARV-providing NGO from administrative grant burdens, and (c) get the extra advantage of the non-ARV services?

A: Please review the APS and the evaluation criteria for information about projects solicited through the APS and how they will be evaluated. The APS evaluation criteria recognize the importance of a comprehensive approach that appropriately integrates different interventions.

1.4 Q: Please advise how we should manage budget implications resulting from a new PEPFAR partner entering into a partnership with an existing PEPFAR partner. We envisage that existing partners may incur additional costs resulting from the implementation of the program. How do we deal with this? Do we effect those costs in our proposal? Or do you incorporate the costs in the next negotiations for renewed funds? How do we address the risk of rejection on their application?

A: All costs for a project submitted for consideration under the APS should be reflected in the concept paper and full proposal submissions.

1.5 Q: In this APS, do profit making companies include their profit margin or not?

A: For-profit entities are eligible to apply under the APS. The Emergency Plan is a service delivery program intended to maximize the effectiveness of supported programs. Funded projects implemented under the Emergency Plan by for-profit organizations are to be carried out on a not-for-profit basis.

- 1.6 Q: I am aware that a key component of the program is the monitoring and evaluation of projects and that this can be outsourced. Do you have any preferred organizations/groups that one would outsource to, in order to fulfill this requirement and reach a satisfactory result?

A: No. Applicants should make their own determination of what elements of a project must be outsourced and to whom.

- 1.7 Q: Does the requirement for 11 point Times New Roman type apply to all text within the document or can we use our discretion when formatting headers etc. I was hoping that for ease of reading purposes that I could use a larger font size to clearly delineate between sections.

A: The APS clearly states that the concept paper should be completed using Times New Roman 11-point font. Applicants are free to use formatting techniques, such as bold or italics.

- 1.8 Q: As noted in the APS profit making organizations have to forego the profit. Does this rule apply to service providers as well? We believe that if the lead company takes the position of foregoing profit then the service providers can include their profits. Please is this correct?

A: For-profit entities are eligible to apply under the APS. Applicants may include in their applications service providers who are for-profit entities. The Emergency Plan is a service delivery program intended to maximize the effectiveness of supported programs. Funded projects implemented under the Emergency Plan by for-profit organizations are to be carried out on a not-for-profit basis.

- 1.9 Q: Is the executive summary considered part of the 8 page concept document or can it be counted separately?

A: The required cover page and summary budget do not count toward the 8 page limit. All other components of the concept paper, including the executive summary, count toward the 8 page limit.

- 1.10 Q: What should be included in the Executive Summary for the concept paper?

A: Please review the APS. The APS on p. 11 requires an executive summary that describes how the proposed project will address directly one or more of the APS-defined objectives. The description of the concept paper format further requires a

summary of proposed activities, including geographic reach, target populations and explanation of how proposed activities contribute to the South African Government's Strategic or Comprehensive Plan.

1.11 Q: What is the anticipated timeframe between concept paper submission and invitation to submit a full proposal?

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-006-002, 7.1

The concept paper review period depends upon the number of submissions received. The U.S. Government (USG) anticipates that it will complete the concept paper review process in approximately one month. It is expected that organizations will be invited to submit full proposals at the end of April or early May, and that full proposals will be due in the second week of June.

1.12 Q: Can a current Emergency Plan prime recipient be a sub-recipient with a new prime recipient?

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 6.4

Any eligible applicant may have as its sub-grantee or sub-partner an organization that does currently receive Emergency Plan funds directly from the USG in South Africa.

1.13 Q: Can we use as an indicator "the number of women referred to facilities that offer PMTCT services", even if we are not directly providing those services? If so, would this fall under PMTCT or Prevention/Other Behavior Change?

A: For information about indicators, including guidance about whether services or indicators are considered to be in the area of PMTCT or Other Prevention, please review the South Africa Strategic Information Manual available at the South Africa Emergency Plan website. <http://pepfar.pretoria.usembassy.gov>. Go to PEPFAR@work> Policy Guidance. Generally a prime partner will report on its activities as well as activities of any sub-partner. The distinction between services considered to be "direct" or "indirect" is described in the South Africa Strategic Information Manual.

1.14 Q: Does PEPFAR South Africa have any preference for particular geographic focus?

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 7.12

The PEPFAR program operates in all Provinces in South Africa. Many HIV service providers are currently concentrated in certain urban areas. Preference under the APS will be given to organizations targeting underserved areas in rural areas or peri-urban areas where there is a lack of HIV and AIDS services. Please see the evaluation criteria included in the APS.

See also Modification Number Two to APS 674-06-002, 3.11

The Emergency Plan is interested in providing services in all provinces. There is an emphasis to provide services to under-served areas, but these are found throughout South Africa – in all provinces as well as urban and rural areas.

1.15 Q: On the APS Concept Paper Cover Sheet, one Project Type is “Scale Up of Existing Project.” Should this description be used even if the current project is not funded by PEPFAR?

A: Yes. Please check the box for “scale up of existing project” if the concept paper describes an expansion of a current project, whether the current project is currently supported through the Emergency Plan or not.

1.16 Q: Given that a year may go by before a Project Manager might be expected to begin work on this program, are applicants still required to name a specific person as project manager in the concept paper even though that person’s availability is likely to change over this time span?

A: The APS requires information about an applicant’s staffing and management plans. Applicants are encouraged to submit information about key personnel as part of a full application. If an applicant does not have a commitment from a specific project manager, the applicant should explain the situation in the application.

1.17 Q: How strictly should applicants adhere to the concept paper format referenced on page 11 of the APS? Assuming that the application stays within the page limit, will there be penalties for including other sections in addition to the categories listed on APS page 11?

A: Applicants are strongly encouraged to follow the instructions provided in the APS. There are no penalties for including additional information in applications that are within the page limitations.

1.18 Q: Regarding the Summary Budget to be included with the Concept Paper, you have requested a two-year budget. Is this a calendar year budget or a fiscal year budget and what is the funding cycle? Given that funds will not be disbursed until March or April 2007, would you like the first year budget to be pro-rated based on the timing of funds disbursement?

A: Successful applicants under the APS will have up to two years to implement their programs starting when they enter into agreements to receive funding. Budgets should be submitted on a fiscal year basis starting with the first receipt of funds expected in March or April 2007.

1.19 Q: Can recipients spend money budgeted in the proposal before funds are actually disbursed and then reclaim money spent prior to disbursement?

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-006-002, 7.13

In extreme or unusual circumstances, the USG can allow an organization to commence activities before the date an agreement is signed, but ideally by less than a month or two. If, from a technical point of view, it is essential that the program is not delayed, reimbursement for expenses incurred prior to award would be determined on a case by case basis.

2. Following are questions and answers from the pre-application workshop held in Bloemfontein on March 9, 2006.

2.1 Q: I am from Department of Education. You mentioned that South African government departments do not go through the same process and should apply directly to the USG for Emergency Plan for funding.

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-006-002, 6.8

South African Government agencies and departments may submit proposals for consideration directly to the U.S. Embassy, and are not required to submit concept papers under the APS. South African Government entities who wish to submit proposals for consideration should contact the PEPFAR Secretariat at the U.S. Embassy. Initial inquiries can be submitted to southafricapepfar@state.gov.

2.2 Q: Does the funding allow for vehicles? Our organization has six satellite sites approximately 200 kilometers apart. In order to conduct careful monitoring and evaluation it would be necessary to have a vehicle to enable regular site visits for data collection and so on.

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 7.8

PEPFAR funding can be used for infrastructure or equipment on a limited basis, but the primary focus of the program is on service delivery. Often equipment or infrastructure is required in order to carry out service delivery. The program has funded vehicles such as mobile clinics when those vehicles are essential to provide services to difficult to reach populations.

If an applicant can demonstrate that it is essential to service delivery, a vehicle may be considered. Organizations need to balance appropriate M&E with service delivery.

2.3 Q: In your experience what types of locations receive more funding – urban or rural?

A: Projects in both rural and urban areas are eligible to apply for funding under the APS. There is not a particular bias towards urban projects, townships or rural communities. The Emergency Plan targets underserved areas – these are found throughout South Africa in urban and rural areas alike.

- 2.4 Q: Many projects designed to provide service delivery face obstacles due to the limited accessibility of central facilities. How can Emergency Plan-funded projects assist with this issue?

A: Some Emergency Plan partners working in a central location such as a district hospital have overcome transport obstacles by forming links with a number of programs in surrounding areas, making services more accessible.

- 2.5 Q: The activation of new sites is often associated with an influx of beneficiaries. As a project develops can the scope of the project change to reflect new situations and demands?

A: The USG recognizes that there will be modifications in project activities and will work with partners to make adjustments as necessary.

- 2.6 Q: The program encourages organizations to work together. However, in my experience, many organizations, particularly the smaller faith-based organizations (FBOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), struggle to organize themselves and develop partnerships.

A: The APS evaluation criteria recognize the importance of a comprehensive approach that appropriately integrates different interventions. The USG facilitates collaboration among partners through information sharing and thematic partner meetings.

- 2.7 Q: In terms of setting targets, can we phrase our targets as a range, e.g. 900 – 1200?

A: For information about indicators please review the South Africa Strategic Information Manual available at the South Africa Emergency Plan website. <http://pepfar.pretoria.usembassy.gov>. Go to PEPFAR@work> Policy Guidance. For applications under the APS, organizations should provide an estimated number, such as ‘a target estimate of 1000 beneficiaries,’ rather than a range. The USG seeks to ensure that Emergency Plan partners are successful in reaching their targets. After the completion of the APS solicitation process, USG activity managers and M&E officers will work with successful partner organizations to assist them to identify targets that are both concrete and realistic.

- 2.8 Q: Our organization provides training and support for an organization providing OVC services. We are, therefore, indirectly reaching the OVC. Can we include a budget for OVC in our overall budget for capacity building?

A: Organizations can include sub-grants as part of an application under the APS. Any planned activities should be included in the budget.

- 2.9 Q: Page 2 of the APS suggests that organizations can only be guaranteed of funding for a one-year period. Our organization is already receiving USG funding and is performing well. Is it correct to conclude that there is no assurance or guarantee of funding for us beyond this twelve-month period?

A: USG funding is provided on a one-year funding cycle and organizations are evaluated on an annual basis. There is no guarantee of funding from one year to the next. Under this APS there is an expectation that funding will be available for two years. As noted in the APS, it is possible that project extensions beyond two years will be granted pending project success and availability of funds.

- 2.10 Q: Our organization works in partnership with other organizations. How will M&E work in situations where there are a number of different partners?

A: For information about indicators please review the South Africa Strategic Information Manual available at the South Africa Emergency Plan website. <http://pepfar.pretoria.usembassy.gov>. Go to PEPFAR@work> Policy Guidance. Each prime partner provides the USG with a single report that includes information from all sub-partners. Consortia submit a single report. Organizations providing treatment services also submit a single report, but the information is disaggregated by site.

- 2.11 Q: What is the turn around time for funding proposals and the funding itself?

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 7.1

The concept paper review period depends upon the number of submissions received. The U.S. Government (USG) anticipates that it will complete the concept paper review process in approximately one month. It is expected that organizations will be invited to submit full proposals at the end of April or early May, and that full proposals will be due in the second week of June.

3. Following are questions and answers from the pre-application workshop held in Nelspruit on March 13, 2006.

- 3.1 Q: What currency should budgets use?

A: Budgets submitted with APS applications should be in US dollars using the exchange rate of R6=\$1.

- 3.2 Q: In the presentation there was no mention of nutritional support for people living with HIV/AIDS.

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 7.4

The focus of the Emergency Plan is HIV and AIDS service delivery. Food security programs alone will not qualify for funding. However, the Emergency Plan can support funding for nutrition on a limited basis, especially when nutrition is an essential element of an HIV intervention, such as an OVC program where nutrition

is important. More detailed guidelines about nutrition are in development. It is advisable to focus on HIV service delivery in any proposal, and then identify why any proposed nutrition elements are essential for HIV service delivery.

- 3.3 Q: Can the budget average out to \$500,000 per year e.g. \$480 000 in year one and \$520 000 in year two.

A: No. Applications must include an annual budget between \$500,000 to \$2 million each year.

- 3.4 Q: Will the New Partners Initiative retain the existing fifteen PEPFAR focus countries?

A: For further information about the new partners initiative, please see <http://www.pepfarnpi.org>. It is likely that applicants from the Emergency Plan focus countries will be eligible to apply for funding under the New Partners Initiative.

- 3.5 Q: How precise should organizations be about the targeted number of beneficiaries in the concept paper?

A: For information about indicators please review the South Africa Strategic Information Manual available at the South Africa Emergency Plan website. <http://pepfar.pretoria.usembassy.gov>. Go to PEPFAR@work> Policy Guidance. For applications under the APS, organizations should provide an estimated number, such as 'a target estimate of 1000 beneficiaries,' rather than a range. The USG seeks to ensure that Emergency Plan partners are successful in reaching their targets. After the completion of the APS solicitation process, USG activity managers and M&E officers will work with successful partner organizations to assist them to identify targets that are both concrete and realistic.

- 3.6 Q: Our organization works in partnership with government, however, the APS suggests that there is a separate mechanism for government funding. How should we go about constructing our proposal? Should we include government?

A: The Emergency Plan encourages partnerships with South African government at all levels. As noted in the APS, Applicants are strongly encouraged to form, describe and document partnerships with the South African Government (at all levels). The APS evaluation criteria provide points for relationships with the South African government.

- 3.7 Q: Our organization works with rape and sexual assault. Would we be eligible for funding for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)?

A: Yes. PEP would fall under the “other prevention” category.

- 3.8 Q: We assist government to provide PEP. Can we still apply for funding even though we do not do it all ourselves?

A: In order to report on the ‘number of people reached’ targets, organizations are not required to provide every service that is a component of providing appropriate care or treatment. In order for an intervention to be considered “direct” service delivery, the partner must have a presence at the service delivery site at least twice a month; be able to provide auditable records; and be able to demonstrate that their program has had an effect on the quality or quantity of services. For additional information about indicators, including the definition of direct service delivery, please review the South Africa Strategic Information Manual available at the South Africa Emergency Plan website. <http://pepfar.pretoria.usembassy.gov>. Go to PEPFAR@work> Policy Guidance.

- 3.9 Q: The presentation referred to the PEPFAR APS for organizations seeking in excess of \$500,000 per year, and to the Small Grants Program for organizations seeking \$5,000 to \$10,000 per year. Is there any ‘in-the-middle’ type of grant?

A: Organizations may link up with other groups and put together a combined application or consortium that would be eligible under the APS.

- 3.10 Q: Where does research fit into the Emergency Plan?

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 8.14

There is limited funding available for targeted evaluations of services, such as operations research into the effectiveness of treatment or care programs. Review the guidelines in the APS for more detailed guidance. Generally the targeted evaluations must be designed to improve service delivery.

- 3.11 Q: Assuming that there is a learning curve, are indicators likely to evolve over time?

A: Emergency Plan indicators do change from time to time. The USG does not anticipate significant indicator changes during the remainder of the Emergency Plan period. The USG seeks to establish collaborative relationships with its partners, and creates opportunities for partners to participate and provide feedback on items such as recommended indicator modifications through forums such as working groups, M&E trainings, and data quality assessments.

- 3.12 Q: Our organization has a number of European partners. Can we include them in our proposal?

A: Yes. European organizations are eligible to apply under the APS. See also Modification Number Two to APS 674-006-002, 2.11

If an international organization applies, they are encouraged to partner with a local South African organization. Applications with local partners and local experience will score additional points according to the APS evaluation criteria.

3.13 Q: What are the pre-award assessments referred to on page 9?

A: Pre-award assessments confirm the capacity of a potential funding recipient by reviewing basic financial and management systems, and the ability to account for donor funds and how they are used.

3.14 Q: Should we include M&E training as a budget line item?

A: Applicants should include in their budgets all items for which they are seeking Emergency Plan funding. The USG does provide M&E training to build the capacity of partner organizations free of charge, but partners need to budget for travel expenses.

3.15 Q: What determines the reporting period?

A: The USG financial year runs from 1 October to 30 September. Annual reports for the period ending September 30 are due three weeks later (October 21). Semi-annual reports for the period ending March 31 are due April 21. For partners providing ARV treatment services, quarterly reports for the period ending December 31 are due on January 21 and for the period ending June 30 are due on July 21.

3.16 Q: Do organizations need to furnish the USG with original receipts, credit card slips, air ticket stubs and so on?

A: In the ordinary course of business, organizations would not be expected to submit such documentation to the USG for every expenditure, but partners are required to implement appropriate internal systems of good governance and financial management. According to provisions of the agreement, organizations are required to retain support documentation (i.e. receipts, original or otherwise) for every expenditure for up to three years. The USG or outside auditors may audit or request this documentation at any time over those three years.

3.17 Q: How do you deal with budgetary modifications?

A: The USG recognizes that there will be modifications in project activities and will work with partners to make adjustments when they become necessary. Generally organizations can make adjustments to program budgets of up to \$250,000 or 20%; whichever is less, without prior USG approval. This flexibility may vary from agreement to agreement and among USG agencies. Partners should consult with USG activity managers before making program or budget adjustments.

3.18 Q: For international and US public benefit organizations is an annual audit required for each award and should that be budgeted for?

A: Generally any project expenditure in excess of \$300 000 per year should be audited each year, and it would be advisable to include this cost in program budgets. Incidentally, the USG conducts annual data quality audits for a subset of some Emergency Plan partners at no cost to partners.

- 3.19 Q: Should activities end in 2008? Our organization is very active during the summer months from September to March. How will this fit in with the USG funding cycle?

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 7.10

The USG fiscal year runs from October to September each year. Although the fiscal year begins in October, Emergency Plan funds are generally not available immediately. Based on prior experience, the USG anticipates that funds for new projects selected through the APS will be available in March/April 2007. The fiscal year will end in September, and that is the deadline for entering into agreements to obligate the funds. Implementing organizations will have two years to implement their programs starting when they enter into agreements to receive funding.

See also Modification Number One to APS 674-006-002, 7.24

The Emergency Plan is a five-year program ending in Fiscal Year 2008. It may be renewed beyond this fixed timeframe, but there can be no assurances about what form such a renewal might take.

See also Modification Number Two to APS 674-006-002, 2.28

Although the Emergency Plan is a five-year program (2003-2008), it is understood that continued USG funding support for some partners probably will be necessary beyond 2008. Applicants are, however, required to document a sustainability strategy that will assure essential services are maintained following completion of the award term.

- 3.20 Q: Will organizations receive the funds in advance or will they be reimbursed for relevant expenditures?

A: It is normal USG policy to allow for 30 day advances to grantee and cooperative agreement partners. This option is available for organizations that have accounting and reporting systems in place to adequately account for USG funds. These funds are required to be maintained in a separate, interest-bearing bank account with interest refunded to the USG. US-based organizations may also qualify for a Letter of Credit.

- 3.21 Q: Should organizations use their funds and hope that the USG funding will come through?

A: See the previous question and answer. The USG would prefer that organizations wait until they have received the funds before commencing activities.

- 3.22 Q: This meeting is the last of a series of meetings and attendees do not have the same amount of time to put together the concept paper as organizations that attended earlier sessions. Is the deadline for our submissions still March 31, 2006?

A: The due date for concept paper submissions will be March 31, 2006.

- 3.23 Q: The APS emphasizes scale and impact, suggesting a doubling of results in the third year. Is there a guide to scaling up in the SASI manual? Would an organization be rejected if it did not reach the minimum threshold?

A: There is no minimum threshold for scaling up of any individual project. The APS evaluation criteria recognize the importance of projects that can be increased in scale by replication of successful interventions or by expansion to additional geographic regions.

- 3.24 Q: Does the APS process allow for negotiation around the content of the proposed activities? For instance will organizations be given an opportunity to tweak or refine their submissions if there is something that the USG would prefer an organization to change but generally thinks that the proposal is good enough to accept?

A: When organizations are invited to submit full proposals the USG will provide some feedback from the concept paper evaluation review. It will be a short summary of the feedback rather than a negotiation. Applicants are then given a chance to revise their submissions in the preparation of full proposals to address concerns identified by the USG.

- 3.25 Q: Can an organization submit more than one application?

A: Yes.

- 3.26 Q: The APS suggests that under-serviced areas will be prioritized – Is Mpumalanga an under serviced area or will funding focus on provinces such as the Eastern Cape? Will Mpumalanga be seriously considered?

A: See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 7.12

The PEPFAR program operates in all Provinces in South Africa. Many HIV service providers are currently concentrated in certain urban areas. Preference under the APS will be given to organizations targeting underserved areas in rural areas or peri-urban areas where there is a lack of HIV and AIDS services. Please see the evaluation criteria included in the APS.

See also Modification Number Two to APS 674-06-002, 3.11

The Emergency Plan is interested in providing services in all provinces. There is an emphasis to provide services to under-served areas, but these are found throughout South Africa – in all provinces as well as urban and rural areas.

3.27 Q: Would anthropological research into behavior change be an eligible funding area?

A: The Emergency Plan is a service delivery program. See Modification Number One to APS 674-06-002, 8.14

There is limited funding available for targeted evaluations of services, such as operations research into the effectiveness of treatment or care programs. Review the APS for more detailed guidance. Generally the targeted evaluations must be designed to improve service delivery.

3.28 Q: The close relationship between the USG and Emergency Plan partners suggests that projects will be implemented through Cooperative Agreements. Will partners need to comply with the standards for Cooperative Agreements, such as the approval of an implementation plan, approval of M&E plan and so on?

A: For a description of substantial involvement by the USG in partner activities, see the APS.

Many projects implemented through the HHS/Centers for Disease Control are Cooperative Agreements. Projects implemented through USAID may or may not be Cooperative Agreements depending on the circumstances. Regardless, the implementation of the Emergency Plan is a cooperative process and there will be substantial USG involvement in partner activities. Generally for Cooperative Agreements, partner organizations will be expected to collaborate with the USG in development of work plans, resources plans, and major staffing decisions. In many cases the APS full proposal will form the basis of the first year's work plan.

See also Modification Number Two to APS 674-06-002, 2.3

Generally, under a cooperative agreement the USG is significantly involved in recipient activities, including planning, technical assistance, approval of key personnel and budgeting. Grants involve a transfer of financial resources, and there is less intensive USG involvement in recipient activities.

3.29 Q: Do consortia need to draw up an agreement with sub-partners giving a breakdown of roles and responsibilities?

A: The lead organization will be responsible for funding and reporting, and should obtain a demonstration of commitment from consortium partners to deliver the consortium services. Applicants must agree to roles and responsibilities in any partnership or consortium. A memorandum of understanding or agreement among partners or consortium members would typically document such an arrangement.

3.30 Q: Many donor-funded projects require a contribution from the organization. Is the Emergency Plan the same?

A: There is no explicit requirement for co-funding. Leveraging and co-funding are recognized in the APS evaluation criteria.

3.31 Q: Would a university community still be referred to as a community and would it qualify for funding?

A: Yes community based organizations (CBOs) and universities are eligible to apply for Emergency Plan funding under the APS.

See also Modification Number Two to APS 674-06-002, 1.13

The design of an intervention is determined by each applicant. The Emergency Plan has no restriction on involving university students.